CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

"From first to last the District Officer should remember that though he can by study of books gain much side-light on the problems that will confront him, his main business is to get a knowledge of, and deal with, men and things as they are in the village, the field and the bazar. District Officer's main line of work.

He should begin by reading over the volume for his district of Campbell's Gazetteer especially those parts which relate to his charge. Preparation —Campbell's Gazetteer.

He should from the first set himself to get a colloquial command of the vernacular, for that will be his link with the people. An easy and interesting way of improving his knowledge of their language and habits is to read a few pages of a popular vernacular novel daily. Let him store his memory with a few of the proverbs in which the natives of this country delight. In a discussion of any point with the average man, a homely and apposite proverb, Command of the vernacular.

'will move him more

'Than all the ranged reasons of the world.'

He should resist the tendency of all about him in these days to speak only in English. It makes the common people think him aloof from them, and only to be approached by a privileged class. For obvious reasons his English-knowing subordinates will foster Use of the vernacular.

this notion, by speaking nothing else, at least before others, unless resolutely checked.

Hints for conduct.

'To be just and fear not' is a tradition which every District Officer is proud to maintain. It is not so invariably recognised that much of his influence depends on manner. A social slight will rankle longer in a man of the higher classes than injustice. A harsh answer to a man of a lower class will often close his mouth, though he may have that to say which ought to be made known. Many a young officer causes resentment or estrangement through sheer thoughtlessness, and he should be on his guard against this.

Especially cultivate: (1) *Accessibility.*—The peons around every house and tent will, if allowed, quietly hinder and even repel outsiders, sometimes with a view to make a little money, sometimes only to show their own importance. Remember the saying that there is no one however commonplace, and it may be added, however bent on some private object of his own, who cannot give information of interest on at least some one point or other. In the higher ranks of the service restrictions are necessary to avoid waste of time and also because intriguers abuse the grant of private audience to spread false ideas of their own influence, but neither of these dangers need close the doors of the junior officer. The 'open cutcherry' is the palladium of the Indian ryot.

(2) *Insight.*—The man who 'is all ear and no eye' is not of a type that wins popular respect. It should be a main object to discriminate between more or less spiteful tale-bearing and honest information. The one should be discouraged as useless and degrading. Without the other, administration is groping blindfold.

(3) *Knowledge of common lore.*—The countryman, everywhere in the world, thinks the man a fool who does not know the things he is himself familiar with.

(4) *Sympathy.*—The faculty of seeing with another's eyes is indispensible for the right management of men. 'Many a man would rather you entered into his story than granted his request.'

(5) *An even temper.*—Rightly considered, the pride of superior education should make a man scorn to lose his temper with those beneath him. It should give him a lofty patience with the ignorant, foolish and perverse, and on those rare occasions when anger is called for it should be well under control.

(6) *Thoroughness.*—With few exceptions every subordinate will shirk, unless the head of the taluka make it understood by example and precept that every matter is to be taken up and mastered in detail and disposed of without delay. Withal he should never sacrifice.

(7) *Dignity.*—Nothing is gained by forgetting his position as representative of Government, or allowing others to forget it.

Interviews should as a rule be alone. If even a private servant is within hearing the average visitor will not speak without reserve. If all be equally welcomed, there will be no appearance of special favour and confidence, of which the intriguer can take advantage. Interviews.

Lastly, let it be realised that in this country every man of official position lives in the open, in the midst of prying eyes from which nothing is secret. An District Officer's responsible position.

Assistant Collector carrics in his hands the honour of his Government and let him never suppose that he can do anything to sully it which is not speedily known and talked about in the kitchen, the cutcherry, the village and the bazar.

'(It is) my full conviction, that, independent of the prescribed duties which every qualified officer performs, there is no person in a situation of any consequence who does not, both in substance and manner of his conduct, do something every day in his life which ..... has an unseen effect in stengthening or weakening the Government by which he is employed.'—*Malcolm*."